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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A STUDY OF THE REGIONAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVES.

WHEREAS, the legislature created the regional education cooperatives in 1993 to bring education-related services to rural and other underserved areas of the state; and

WHEREAS, regional education cooperatives now serve over fifty-nine of the eighty-nine school districts as well as charter schools and state-supported schools; and

WHEREAS, regional education cooperatives bring direct services to children, families and communities, including federal child find activities, which help identify children who may have special needs at an early age when appropriate interventions may be most effective in helping them reach their full potential; and

WHEREAS, regional education cooperatives have a unique understanding of the strengths and challenges of their members and provide their members with a variety of services, including professional development, special education and other technical assistance, parent training, data collection and analysis, distance education, grant writing and administration, school-board training, cooperative school nurse services and special education-related services, and other services identified as crucial by their members; and

WHEREAS, regional education cooperatives are a vital and

1 necessary component of New Mexico's education system and
2 should continue to serve as a conduit and delivery system for
3 New Mexico's school improvement and educational reforms; and

4 WHEREAS, recent changes in the grant requirements of the
5 federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and other
6 federal programs and in the federal process for reimbursing
7 school districts and other local educational agencies for
8 expenditures have resulted in financial hardships for the
9 regional education cooperatives and their members;

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
11 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative education study
12 committee, the public education department and the regional
13 education cooperatives be requested to study the roles,
14 responsibilities and financial requirements of the regional
15 education cooperatives; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this study include an
17 examination of the public education department's financial
18 reimbursement process and the regional education
19 cooperatives' financial reporting procedures; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education
21 study committee, the public education department and the
22 regional education cooperatives be requested to report their
23 findings and recommendations, including recommendations for
24 statutory changes and funding, if necessary, to the
25 legislative education study committee by October 2008; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
2 transmitted to the director of the legislative education
3 study committee, the secretary of public education and the
4 directors of the regional education cooperatives for
5 appropriate distribution. _____

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